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Official Records

First Committee
16th meeting
Thursday, 20 October 2005, 10.15 a.m.
New York

Chairman Mr. Choi Young-jin ..... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda items 85 to 105 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and the introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: The Committee will now have interactive discussions.

The meeting was suspended at 10.20 a.m. and resumed at 12.10 p.m.

The Chairman: I now call on delegations wishing to introduce draft resolutions.

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): I am taking the floor to introduce two draft resolutions.

The first draft resolution, which is contained in document A/C.1/60/L.45, is entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons" and is co-sponsored by Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Colombia, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Malaysia, Malawi, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Viet Nam, Zambia and my own delegation.

The provision of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States is an obligation that arises from the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter obligates Member States not to use, or threaten to use, force. That obligation extends to the non-use, and non-threat of use, of any weapons, including nuclear weapons. Indeed, that fact was underlined by the resolution of the General Assembly adopted at its first session that declared the intention to outlaw nuclear weapons.

The demand for security assurances was raised by non-nuclear-weapon States in the 1960s, and it crystallized in 1968 during the concluding phase of the negotiations on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The response of nuclear-weapon States, reflected in Security Council resolution 255 (1968), was considered inadequate by non-nuclear-weapon States. At the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I), agreement was reached for the conclusion of an international instrument that would provide binding and credible negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. However, the declarations made by four of the five nuclear-weapon States at SSOD-I, and later at the NPT Review and Extension Conference and reflected in Security Council resolution 984 (1995), were also considered insufficient, qualified and partial by most non-nuclear-weapon States.

At the end of the cold war there was a general expectation that it would be come easier for nuclear-weapon States to extend nuclear security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. Unfortunately, the situation, instead of easing, has become more complex. That is so for several reasons.

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First, with the indefinite extension of the NPT, most nuclear-weapon States have presumed the permanent right to retain nuclear weapons.

Secondly, the commitment contained in article VI of the NPT for complete nuclear disarmament has remained open-ended, even after the widely welcomed commitment at the 2000 NPT Review Conference for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Thirdly, the NPT Review Conference and the September summit both evaded addressing the issues of disarmament, non-proliferation and negative security assurances.

Fourthly, the geographical scope for the use of nuclear weapons has also expanded with the expansion of nuclear alliances and the operationalization of provisions for sharing nuclear weapons and command and control among alliance members.

Fifthly, one major nuclear-weapon State that formally adhered to the principle of no-first-use of nuclear weapons has now disavowed that principle and adopted the posture of first-use of nuclear weapons.

Sixthly, new doctrines of possible use of nuclear weapons, contrary to Security Council resolutions 255 (1968) and 984 (1995), have been propounded, involving, for example, the use of nuclear weapons against the use or threat of use of biological and chemical weapons, the use of nuclear weapons against terrorism and the development of "mini-nukes" for actual battlefield use.

Finally, two additional nuclear-arms States have emerged on the world scene — and there is one other presumed nuclear-arms State, whose status and obligations remain unclear.

In those circumstances, the conclusion of credible negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States has gained greater urgency. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.45 seek to underline and to operationalize that sense of urgency. The draft resolution reaffirms the urgent need to reach early agreement on effective international arrangements on negative security assurances. It notes with satisfaction that there is no objection in principle to the idea of an international convention on the subject. It appeals to all States, especially nuclear-weapon States, to work towards early agreement. It recommends further intensification of efforts to develop a common approach and formula on the issue. Finally, it recommends that the Conference on Disarmament actively continue intensive negotiations with a view to reaching early agreement on negative security assurances.

The sponsors believe that the conclusion of effective arrangements on negative security assurances could constitute a major confidence-building measure in the current tense international circumstances between nuclear- and non-nuclear weapons States, as well as among nuclear-weapon States. It could contribute to reducing the nuclear danger. It could ease the threats that arise from new doctrines of nuclear use, and facilitate the negotiations for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. My delegation and the sponsors of the draft resolution therefore urge the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.45 with the widest possible majority.

The second draft resolution that I would like to introduce, which is contained in document A/C.1/60/L.24, is entitled "Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context".

The maintenance of international peace and security at the global level in many ways depends upon stability at the regional and subregional levels. Instability at the regional and subregional levels breeds a series of arms races, undermines efforts aimed at arms control and disarmament and obstructs the peaceful settlement of disputes, rendering their resolution even more difficult. Such instability also increases poverty and spreads despair and anger.

In introducing this draft resolution, we are guided by the universally acknowledged value of confidence-building measures in many regions and subregions of the world. Pakistan remains convinced that the initiation of such confidence-building measures has rendered, and can continue to render, tangible dividends for peace, help to avert conflicts, facilitate the peaceful settlement of disputes and allow States to invest their resources and energies in socio-economic development. Such an approach could also supplement efforts at arms control and disarmament.

The draft resolution reflects views expressed by Member States on the draft and respects their sensitivities. There is emerging consensus that the potential of confidence-building measures should be fully used through conscious and consistent efforts at the regional and subregional levels.

In its preambular paragraphs, the draft resolution reiterates the basic purposes and principles of the

Charter of the United Nations, as well as General Assembly and Security Council resolutions relating to the prevention of armed conflicts. It recognizes the need for peaceful dialogue to avert conflict, and welcomes the peace processes already initiated in various regions to resolve disputes through peaceful means, bilaterally or through mediation by third parties.

The draft resolution also recognizes that regions that have already developed confidence-building measures at the bilateral, subregional and regional levels in the political and military fields, including arms control and disarmament, have greatly improved the climate of peace and security in their region, and contributed to the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of their peoples.

The operative paragraphs of the draft resolution call upon Member States to refrain from the use or threat of use of force, and to reaffirm their commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. The draft resolution recalls the ways and means arrived at through confidence-building measures in the 1993 report of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and calls upon Member States to pursue them through sustained consultations and dialogue. It also urges States to comply strictly will all bilateral, regional and international arms control and disarmament agreements to which they are parties, underlines that confidence-building measures should contribute to the objectives of strategic stability and emphasizes that the objective of confidence-building measures should be to help to strengthen international peace and security and be consistent with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments.

The draft encourages the promotion of bilateral and regional confidence-building measures to avoid conflict and prevent the unintended and accidental outbreak of hostilities, and requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly on the views of Member States on confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context.

My delegation hopes that the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/60/L.24 will be adopted with the full consent of this Committee.

Mr. Gatan (Philippines): On behalf of the sponsors, the Philippines would like to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.22, which is entitled "The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation" and which has 104 sponsors. In addition, the following seven delegations have signed on to the draft resolution to express their support for it: Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Dominican Republic, Gabon, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Slovakia. That brings to 111 the total number of sponsors to the draft resolution.

I should like to draw the attention of the First Committee to the fact that the draft resolution does not depart from last year's resolution on the subject. The present draft resolution merely contains a technical updating of last year's version.

I would also like to make an oral amendment to paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.22. Instead of referring to 122 subscribing States to The Hague Code of Conduce, the draft resolution should refer to 123, Liberia being the latest country to subscribe to it.

May I also draw the Committee's attention to the fact that the draft resolution was finalized by the plenary of subscribing States to The Hague Code of Conduct. The last intersessional meeting of subscribing States mandated the Philippines to submit this draft resolution as Chair of the subscribing States. On behalf of the sponsors, we therefore commend this draft resolution for adoption by the Committee, preferably by consensus, in order to demonstrate our firm resolve to enhance multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation.

Programme of work

The Chairman: Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to remind members of our programme of work for tomorrow.

As agreed yesterday, we will have informal interactive discussions on disarmament and non-proliferation education in this room for one and a half hours, from 10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. To facilitate our discussion, it is the intention of the Bureau to invite two guests speakers, Mr. Peter Lucas, professor at Columbia University, and Ms. Kathleen Sullivan, representing Educators for Social Responsibility.

After that, the Committee will consider some matters pertaining to its work next week. It is my intention to adjourn the meeting before noon. For about an hour tomorrow, from noon to 1 p.m., we will have an informal informal open-ended discussion on the possible revitalization of the First Committee's agenda for the next session.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.